

S A I N T L O U I S B I R D C L U B B U L L E T I N

Official Organ of the Saint Louis Bird Club
for the Promotion of
Bird Enjoyment, Bird Study and Bird Conservation

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October 21, 1933

Number 7

THE NOVEMBER MEETING OF THE ST. LOUIS BIRD CLUB WILL BE HELD AT CABANNE BRANCH OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY NOV. 15, 8 P. M.

CONSERVATION OF BIRD LIFE

This is the subject of this month's project. We have selected the following news item from the National Association of Audubon Societies' News Bureau, entitled A NEW DEAL IS SOUGHT FOR AMERICA'S WILD WATER-FOWL, as adaptable.

New York, N. Y. --- Declaring that the time has come when the wild water-fowl of America should be given a New Deal, Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson, President of the National Association of Audubon Societies, today stated:

"Unless the best thought, foresight, and honest convictions of conservationists and sportmen of our land are speedily and effectively translated into action, there may yet be witnessed in this generation a cessation of the hunting of wild water-fowl as a sport. Those best acquainted with the past and present status of our wild ducks and geese can not but be profoundly convinced that there has been a steady decline in the fortunes of these birds; so great, indeed, that the present numbers are but a pitiful remnant of the vast congregations which in former days thronged our lakes and bays, sloughs, and marshlands.

"All those who have at heart the interests of our native game birds should not forget that this decrease in our wildfowl carries a solemn warning and has a tragic counterpart in that of our shore birds which, at the beginning of the present century, had been so greatly reduced in numbers that upon passage of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, in 1918, only six species belonging to this extensive group were permitted to be hunted; while today an open season exists on only two of these birds, namely Wilson's snipe and the woodcock."

Continuing, Dr. Pearson said:

"Foremost among the factors contributing to the decrease of wildfowl are the extensive drainage of lakes, ponds, and marshes, with the accompanying spread of agriculture; the enormous increase of hunters, the amazing construction of highways, together with the almost universal use of motor-cars, which has made quickly and easily accessible almost every part of the country. To these factors must be added the use of the magazine shotgun, and the custom of killing these birds from baited shooting-stands, as well as various other minor causes that are part of the destructive processes of civilization."

Dr. Pearson concluded:

"It is with these indisputable facts in mind that the Audubon Association feels the time is ripe for a New Deal for our sadly harassed wildfowl. This should include, as its major feature, a greatly changed attitude of mind on the part of many who indulge in the sport of wild-fowling, and also would involve a new approach and a new ethics of sportsmanship wherin, both as regards legislation and practice, the advantage at all times would be given to the birds.

"It is in conformity with the principles of such a New Deal that the Audubon Association has stood staunchly for the abolishment of shooting over baited waters, and for the discontinuance of the use of the magazine shotgun. In the minds of some these may seem minor considerations in the large constructive program which must be energetically carried out if America's wild ducks and geese are to survive, in goodly numbers, the vicissitudes of our civilization.

"However, to the ever-increasing number of the non-shooting public who enjoy wild-life for its own sake, and to many sportsmen as well, these items are essential parts of the New Deal by which it is sought to preserve our North American waterfowl for future generations; for it may very soon come to pass, unless adequate breeding stocks of these birds are maintained, that an alarmed public opinion, having in mind the extinction of the passenger pigeon and the heath hen through excessive shooting, may demand a cessation of the hunting of our wild ducks and geese."

THE SUBJECT OF NEXT MONTH'S PROJECT IS "MIGRATION". Contributions may be sent to the committee chairman immediately; notable examples of migrating birds, when observed, etc. from your notebook are specially desired.

The new check list of the birds of Missouri by Rudolf Bennett (see below) will be especially welcome to students of ornithology in the Mississippi Valley, as no collective revision of the data has appeared since Widmann's indispensable "Preliminary Catalogue", published in 1907. By the plan adopted, the common name of the species precedes the scientific name. Frequency of occurrence, seasonal status and geographic distribution are indicated. The list is followed by a useful summary of species and subspecies found in North America and Missouri. A sombre group composed of the trumpeter swan, lesser prairie chicken, Eskimo curlew, passenger pigeon and Louisiana paroquet is regarded as extinct in Missouri. One is encouraged, however, by finding the ivory billed woodpecker retained in the list of extant birds in the State. Twenty-seven birds are reported for the first

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time in Missouri. Finally, an interesting "hypothetical list" points out the birds which occur just beyond the Missouri boundaries some of which at least may be found to visit us when further careful search has been made. Dr. Bennett is to be congratulated on the completion of a careful piece of work well done. R. J. T.

EXCHANGES

THE CHICKADEE. A magazine of Worcester County Ornithology, organ of the Forbush Bird Club, Worcester, Mass. Vol. III, No. 3, September 1933.

IOWA BIRD LIFE. Pub. quarterly by the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Fred J. Pierce editor. Vol. III, No. 3, September 1933.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA SERVICE BULLETIN. Vol. XVII, No. 47, 1933.

THE RAVEN. A mimeographed monthly bulletin of The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Lexington, Va. Dr. J. J. Murray, editor. Contains chiefly notes made by members.

THE WILSON BULLETIN. Sioux City, Iowa.

MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON BULLETIN. Boston, Mass.

SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

Published monthly except July, August, and September, on the second Wednesday. Price \$1.00 a year in advance, free to paid-up members of the Club. Subscription begins with the January number.

OFFICERS OF SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB

President, R. J. Terry; First Vice-President, L. M. Dougan; Second Vice-President, Geo. C. Mackay; Recording Secretary, Barbara Cousland; Corresponding Secretary, Elizabeth Allen Satterthwait; Treasurer, Byron W. Moser; Directors, Lillie R. Ernst and Donald M. Hetler.

BULLETIN COMMITTEE

N. R. Barger, Chairman; Donald M. Hetler, Head of Field Observation Department; Louis M. Weber; R. J. Terry, Ex Officio.

Due to the pressure of business duties, Mr. Satterthwait has resigned from the bulletin committee, of which he has been chairman. However, the president of the Club has not allowed this vacancy to stand. The policies of the Bulletin will not be changed, but we wish to direct the attention of all members to the department titled "Field Notes". This department will not be conducted by the bulletin committee chairman, as heretofore, but by Dr. Hetler, a member of the committee. Please send your field notes, therefore, to Dr. D. M. Hetler, 424 E. Big Bend Blvd., Webster; he also may be reached by telephone, Webster 2679. This feature in our Bulletin, namely our own field notes, is the most important, and should be supported by more of the club's members. Mr. Weber takes care of the

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stencil cutting and mimeographing, thus dividing the work, for even the president by his position has a share in the preparation each month.

All notes for Dr. Hetler's department should be sent to him the night of the last day of the month, so that he may have time to compile his article immediately. All other manuscript should be addressed to the chairman, N. R. Barger, C - 11, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, sometime before the first of the month. This will give us time to have the Bulletin in the hands of the secretary, not later than the second Wednesday of each month, for distribution.

Mr. Satterthwait very patiently edited the Bulletin in two columns. Since most of the entire work of the Bulletin was left to him, one month's edition usually entailed about forty-eight hours of work, with the help of Mrs. Satterthwait. Through the suggestion of the club's president, we have ventured to reduce this work considerable by using larger type and writing across the page. While the two column method and all it involves is to be preferred, we thought for so brief a Bulletin, our present method would be acceptable.

Let us, again, remind you of the old subjects on which the committee desires information: The winter habitat of the Red-headed Woodpecker, notes on Passer montanus, personalia, reports of committee chairmen, bird banding notes and field notes.

OTTO WIDMANN

5105 Enright Ave., St. Louis, Mo., June 20, 1933
Dear Miss Cousland,

The middle of June is such a busy time for me, that I have not yet thanked you for the greetings and good wishes from you and the members of the St. Louis Bird Club. The message came early on my birthday and gave me much pleasure.

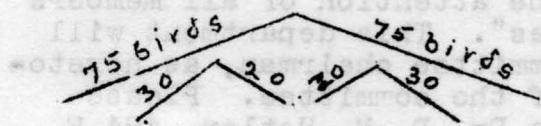
Yours truly, Otto Widmann

Fayette, Missouri, July 25, 1933.

Dear Mr. Widmann,

I have several bird records for this year which I think you might be interested in.

On April 8, I observed a Blue Goose on the Lake of the Ozarks. I was within fifty feet of the bird and got a good look at it before it flew. This seems to be an exceptionally late date for Missouri. Towards evening I saw a flock over 250 White Pelicans flying in a formation as illustrated.



They soon began circling the lake in such a compact ring that

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it was impossible to make out any definite formation; but they soon regained their formation and flew around a bend in the lake. The Herring and Ring-billed Gulls were numerous flying over the lake.

On May 1, Sarah Rogers found a Black Rail on the Central College campus. She was able to capture the bird with some assistance from a college student. There had been a hail storm at noon that day which probably affords the reason it was on the campus, although the bird appeared not to be injured in any way. I kept it that night, and the next day it was shipped to Iowa City, Iowa, where it was mounted for the Central Museum. While I kept it it seemed very tame. Have any more Black Rails been taken in Missouri since your catalog of the Birds of Missouri was published?

An unusually large number of species of Wood Warblers migrated through Fayette this spring; however, I failed to see some of the more common ones that usually migrate through. Among the lists were such notables as Black-throated Blue Warbler, May 6, which I believe is the first record for Howard County; Sycamore Warbler, May 4; Bay-breasted Warbler, May 10; Cape-May Warbler, May 12; Blackburnian Warbler, May 12 and 14, Dr. Gordon Alexander, who did some collecting for Central College, several years ago, and who, I believe, has corresponded with you came through Fayette a few days ago, and stated that he also believed the record of the Cape May Warbler to be the first record for Howard County.

The Western Meadowlark has been observed several times in this county. Mr. Baskett and I first observed it on Oct. 13, 1932. We also observed it on Nov. 16, 1932. In this year Mr. Burchan, Mr. Baskett and myself observed it on March 12, but none of us have seen it since.

The Starling is becoming abundant. Mr. Baskett and I first found a Starling's nest on April 19, while we were looking into a Barn Owl's nest which was located near by. Since that time we have found several nests of the Starling. For several evenings a flock of over a hundred Starlings roosted in some trees near my home.

On July 13 I observed two Blue Grosbeak's nests. One contained four young, the other contained three Blue Grosbeak's eggs and one Cowbird's egg. On July 17 I returned again to find that the nest which had contained four young contained only three, the other was smashed on the ground. The eggs in the other nest had hatched and I destroyed the Cowbird because of the danger of its pushing the young Blue Grosbeaks out of the nest.

I am enclosing a stamped envelope for your reply on the question about the Black Rail. Thanking you in advance for this kind favor, I remain

Yours truly, William Jenner.

August 21, 1933. A few days ago I received Mr. W. Jenner's bird letter and like it so much that I asked him if I could give it to you for a place in the Bulletin of the St. Louis Bird Club.

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He replied with enclosed note which shows that we can encourage young students by publishing their records when they are worth it.

I think just such letters make interesting reading for your bulletin.

August 1, 1933. Dear Mr. Widmann: Your kind letter gives one much encouragement towards spending more time in field work. Since I have written to you, another Blue Grosbeak's nest has been found. All three nests are within an eighth of a mile of each other, along a roadside.

I will gladly give you permission to publish my letter if you think that it is interesting enough. If it is possible for a person outside of St. Louis to take the St. Louis Bird Club's monthly Bulletin, I would like very much to subscribe to it. I am interested in securing all the information that I can about the birds of Missouri, and I cannot think of any better way than through a monthly bulletin such as yours.

Yours truly, William Jenner.

On June 1, 1933 I received my bird banding permit from the United States Department of Agriculture, and on June 29 I received my first supply of bands. Since, I have banded 33 birds, representing 10 species. Of the birds banded, 8 were Cardinals; 7 Tufted Titmice; 7 Rusty Blackbirds; 5 Brown Thrashers; 1 Bronzed Grackle; 1 Blue Jay; 1 Robin; 1 Catbird; 1 Black-billed Cuckoo; and 1 Screech Owl. All except the Black-billed Cuckoo and the Screech Owl were taken in a drop trap, baited with bread. One of the Titmice has repeated 9 times, two of them 5 times and the rest 3 times. None of the other birds have repeated yet.

I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Satterthwait for their help in obtaining my banding permit. Louis M. Weber

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

An American bittern left his haunts in the marshes of Door County, Wisconsin, to spend the day in a cherry orchard on the highlands above Green Bay. This was in the second week of last August. From eight in the morning until half past four in the afternoon this fowl of the wet lands and sedges feasted on grasshoppers in the driest of terra firma and surrounded by a growth of meadow grasses long gone to seed. He was not in the least shy, submitting to inspection at close range and if disturbed, as he was once by the maid suddenly opening the door, taking a short flight, only to resume again his occupation of catching the grass hopper. He did not pursue these insects but practiced the art of still-hunting at which he was an adept: standing motionless until an unlucky hopper approached within range, then swiftly and unerringly capturing him with one darting movement of his spear-like beak. At times he rested, neck retracted, one leg drawn up. If he suspected danger in the too close approach of one of us he assumed a rigid pose, neck stretched straight up to its full length, the beak turned toward the sky; then a hasty retreat through the grass. Often when about to take his prey the bittern's neck undulated from

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The Webster Groves Nature Study Society Bird Group met Sept. 22, 1933 with the usual attenders and with Miss L. R. Ernst and Mr. Geo. C. Happ present. Discussion centered interestingly about Dr. Rudolf Bennitt's form for summarizing all pertinent observations of observers throughout Missouri, and also Dr. Bennitt's suggestion for a State Bird Club. Miss Ernst's suggestion that we attempt such organization under the name "The Widmann Bird Club of the Missouri Valley," was enthusiastically received and plans were discussed for holding a preliminary meeting at the Webster Group November meeting at Mr. Widmann's if suitable, then have the real organizing meeting in March, at time Dr. A. A. Allen will be in St. Louis, lecturing with sound reels.

The October meeting of the Webster Bird Group will be held at the residence of Mr. S. P. Jones, 690 Bonita Ave., Friday, Oct. 27, at 8 p. m. Mr. Harold O'Byrne will speak on "A Bird's-Eye View of the Insect."